Sanctions against South Africa

1668. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state what prompted India to be the first country to forsake sanction in the field of sports and games by inviting practically an all White South African Cricket Team with a racial emblem of yester years even though an eminent personality like President Mugabe, recipient of Nehru Peace Award expressed fear about reforms in South Africa because of the on going violence?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): The invitation to the South African Cricket team to tour India was in consonance with the decision taken at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Harare in October, 1991 to lift "people-to-people" sanctions immediately. The decision included lifting the sports boycott in disciplines where the appropriate sporting organisations in South Africa had been integrated non-racially and re-admitted to the relevant international governing body, particularly cricket. The decision was supported by the African National Congress. Apart from India, the other countries party to the above decision, include among others, Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Uganda, Kenya and Namibia.

It is not correct to state that the Suoth African team had a racial emblem. During its visit to India, the team did not display the erstwhile springbok emblem. The touring colours were green, gold and dark blue of the non-racial United Cricket Board of South Africa.

While the South African team, which actually played the matches was white, it also included two young non-white reserves. The team was accompanied by Mr. Krish Mackerdhuj, a South African of Indian origin, who is the President-elect of the United Cricket Board of South Africa. According to South African officials, now that the UCBSA has started a coaching scheme for the non-whites, it is expected that the South African national team would contain players of all races in the near future.

The Indian Government fully shares the sentiments expressed by President Mugabe of Zimbabwe regarding the threat posed to the reform process in South Africa by the ongoing violence in black townships. In this context, the Government of India is greatly encouraged by the success of the pre-Constitutional talks held between the ANC, the South African Government and 18 other political parties, on November 20, 1991, which has led to a decision to convene an All Party Conference, to discuss the Constitutional future of South Africa on December 20, 1991.

India-South Africa relations

1669. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is likely to be any thaw in the Indo-South African relations as a sequel to the cricket ties;

(b) whether Government are considering the opening of consular offices or diplomatic representation in South Africa in the near future;

(c) whether the Harare Commonwealth declaration of October last calls for a phased withdrawal of sanctions against Pretoria; and

(d) if so, what is India's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) India's invitation to the South African Cricket team was in consonance with the decision taken by the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Harare in October, 1991, to lift 'people-to-people'